SO THERE!

FRANKLIN P. ADAMS

10 ¢

SO THERE!

BOOKS BY
FRANKLIN P. ADAMS

Among Us Mortals
By and Large
In Other Words
Overset
Something Else Again
So There!
Tobogganing on Parnassus
Weights and Measures

SO THERE!

BY

FRANKLIN P. ADAMS

GARDEN CITY NEW YORK
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TO
RING W. LARDNER

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CONTENTS

	PAGE
To His Lyre	1
Life	2
Ballade of the Easily Influenced	6
A Spring Lay of Ancient Rome	8
To a Roman Vamp	10
On the Fleetness of Time	11
A Warning	12
Horace Flackhouse	14
Cold Weather Stuff	15
To Mæcenas	18
To the Polyandrous Lydia	20
In Praise of Simplicity	22
Thoughts on Spring	25
Silver Threads among the Gold	27
To Chloë	28
Lullaby	29
Valentine	30
On Surveying New Equipment	31
To a Big Girl	32
"When the Hounds of Spring Are on Winter's Traces"	34

CONTENTS

	PAGE
Ballade of a Polygamous Heart	36
The Atmospheric Complex	38
A Cure for Insomnia	39
Spring Roses and Thorns	41
To Señor Vicente Blasco Ibáñez	42
It Might Have Been	44
Three Cheers: A Patriotic Poem	46
Folk Songs	49
Glee	51
From the Health Anthology	53
A Not Too Deep Sea Chantey	56
Beachcomber's Chantey	57
The Vermilion Blues	58
On Barbers	59
Sehnsucht	60
To Polyandra	62
Destitution	63
The Mercenary Lover	64
From the Freudian's "Sylvie and Bruno"	65
The Flappers' Freudian Song Book	66
Thrift Mottoes for Framing	67
The Poets Revised for Smile Week	68
The Strange Case of Alonzo Benjamin O'Toole and Edgar Arthur Abbott	70
Poetry and Thoughts on Same	72
Christmas Greetings for 1923	74
An Echo of the War	75

CONTENTS

	PAGE
Song	78
The Drama	79
Kingsley Revised	80
To Arizona and Return	81
A Fair Crumpler	82
"Girl for Illusions"	83
Health and the Vision	84
To a Lady	85
The Newer Heroines	86
On "In American," by John V. A. Weaver	88
A Fable for Critics	90
In the Chestertonian Manner	91
The Patriot	93
De Senectute	94
The Found Chord	96
De Amicitia	98
To My Fountain Pen	100
After Reading a Lot of Poetry	102
Dulcinea Goes In for Verse	104
Jealousy	106
The Business Situation	108
Winter	110
The Real Interest	113
The Seasons	115
Lines Written in Candor, with a Copy of "The Complete Works of Charles Stuart Calverley," to a Lady	117
To Annie, Gone but Not Forgotten	119

CONTENTS

	PAGE
To a Little Boy	121
Perversity	122
October	123
Song	124

SO THERE!

SO THERE!

To His Lyre

AD LYRAM

Horace: Book I, Ode 32

"Poscimur. Siquid vacui sub umbra"—

If ever, as I struck thy strings,
  My song has sounded sempiternal,
Help me, my Lyre, to glorious things
  For this matutinary journal.

Thine erstwhile owner versified
  War, Love, and Wine in panegyric;
And folks in Lesbos often cried,
  "That kid can chuck a nasty lyric!"

Then aid me, Lute, beginning now!
  Give theme for colophon or leader;
And some day there may grace my brow
  The laurel from some Grateful Reader.

Life

On the way to my daily occupation,
Passing adown a chill, a dark way,
Entered I into the subway station
Known as Cathedral Parkway.

Ride who will on the elevated,
Tramp who will on the open road,
I took the subway, be it stated.
It's nearest to my abode.

Life, I thought, is a game of cricket;
Life, I mused, is a thing alive.
I bought a ticket, I bought a ticket;
I think that I purchased five.

Those are the things that seethe and foment;
Those are the things that weight my brow—
Not that I think they're of any moment,
But Poetry's like that now.

LIFE

I waited six minutes upon that landing,
And at 9:42 I took an express;
Women and men were seated and standing,
Thinking of things, I guess.

And I looked over a gentleman's shoulder—
He was probably forty-six years of age—
And read—though he may have been six months older—
All of the *Times* front page.

But something happened on which I reckoned
Not. I was reading, I said, the *Times*,
When the gentleman got off at Seventy-Second,
So I stood thinking of rhymes.

There were many persons standing near me,
Dull appearing and silly of face;
But in modern poetry, thought I, dear me!
Nothing is commonplace.

SO THERE!

If I describe them, not acutely,
Telling, at length, what clothes they wear,
Manneredly, prosily, overminutely—
Merely that they were there.

I shall achieve quite a reputation
For seeing the Calm above the Strife;
I'll be a Poet of Observation,
One who has Looked on Life;

One who can give interpretation,
One to invest the crude with grace,
One to—but then I reached my station.
It was, I recall, Park Place.

And I walked to the office, far from skittish,
(I walk that way, as a general rule),
And I wished, I wished I were one of the British
Bards of the modern school.

A bard who could take his pen and ink it,
Listing things in a one-two-three
Order, till critics and men would think it
Utterest poetry.

LIFE

Oh for the storms of wild applause it
Would receive from the human race,
Most of whom'd think it was great be-
cause it
Merely was commonplace.

Still, on my way to my occupation,
Passed I adown a chill, a dark way.
Entered I into the subway station
Known as Cathedral Parkway.

Ballade of The Easily Influenced

As firm as a boulder am I,
I'm stolid and solid and gray;
My standards are moveless and high,
My motto's forever and aye.
And yet, when I go to a play
With a villain indecent and grim,
Whose aim is to cheat and to slay,
I think I'm a little like him.

I read all the poems, and sigh
That Lucy is buried away;
I weep at the Byron Good-by,
I read Dr. Watts, and I pray;
I'm faithless with Edna Millay;
With Whittier I'm earnest and prim.
. . . Been reading some Shakespeare
to-day—
I think I'm a little like him.

THE EASILY INFLUENCED

J. Cæsar, I read, was a guy
  Who trembled a bit in a fray;
Napoleon, they tell me, would cry
  If things went a little astray;
  King Henry the Eighth was a gay
Old goof of uxorious whim—
  I chuck him a little bouquet;
I think I'm a little like him.

L'ENVOI

O Queen, I am commonest clay,
  My lamp is a-flicker and dim.
There's no one of whom I can't say:
  "I think I'm a little like him."

A Spring Lay of Ancient Rome

Horace: Book I, Ode 4

"Solvitur acris hiems grata vice veris et Favoni"

Winter's turned his cold and stony
Countenance the other way;
Bathing has begun at Coney;
Blow the zephyrs down the bay.

Cattle seek again the pasture,
Life no longer is congealed;
Spring approaches; come and cast your
Eye upon the verdant field.

Venus—she of Cytherea—
Leads the dance beneath the moon,
And the Graces tread in glee a
Syncopated rigadoon.

"Say it with myrtle!" be your motto;
Buy a nobby vernal lid.
Pray to Faunus in the grotto,
Kill for him a lamb or kid.

A SPRING LAY

Be you owner of a fortune
  Or as poor in kale as I'm,
Death (the Reaper) will importune
  You, and get you in your time.

Say "Farewell"—ere Pluto call for
  You to bear you to his shades—
"Lycidas, whom the flappers fall for
  (Not to say the Roman blades)."

To a Roman Vamp

AD LYDIAM

Horace: Book I, Ode 8

"Lydia dic, per omnes"

Tell me, Lydia, why you ruin
  Sybaris with your burning love?
Once he was a discus bruin;
  Once he loved the sun above.

Soft the sinew, gone the fibre
  Of his green, athletic youth;
Now he fears the yellow Tiber—
  He who might have rivalled Ruth!

Sulks he as the son of Thetis
  At the Trojan falling did;
This the burden of my treatise:
  Why don't you lay off him, Lyd?

On the Fleetness of Time

AD LEUCONOEN

Horace: Book I, Ode 11

"Tu ne quaesieris—scire nefas—quem mihi, quem tibi"

Do not ask, for none can tell you
  Ever what the end will be.
  All the ouijas of Chaldee
Rarely any future spell you.
Either Jupiter will knell you
  Soon or late. The moments flee.
  This my jazzy recipe:
Dance or ever the Reaper fell you.

O Leuconoe, let us hurry!
  Reap the harvest of to-day.
Only those who fret and worry
  Throw eternity away.
Here's the old Horatian habit:
Youth's elusive; better grab it.

A Warning

Horace: Book I, Ode 5

"Quis multa gracilis te puer in rosa"

Tell me, my Pyrrha, what youth is now
chasing thee?
Who is thy flowered and redolent slave?
Where's the cool grotto in which he's
embracing thee?
Who is the cause of thy permanent wave?

Often, how often, he'll call thee per-
fidious!
Frequently rail at the mutable gods!
He who is thrall to thy graces insidious,
Playing a game against terrible odds!

Who for thy favour is eager and sedulous,
Thinking thee pliable, deeming thee
kind,
Loving and worshiping thee—the poor,
credulous
Fish, to thy falsity utterly blind!

A WARNING

Here in the temple of Neptune, I dedicate
Weeds that are dripping with warning, and damp.
DANGER! LOOK OUT FOR THE SIREN! I'll predicate
Pyrrha's a plausible, beautiful vamp.

Horace Flackhouse

Book I, Ode 22

"Integer vitae, scelerisque purus"

By Our Own Ed Howe

Horace Flackhouse has lived in town all his life. He is seventy-two years old. He has always paid his debts and kept single, though there have been rumors that Horace owed a lot of money, and, since 1879, he has been reported engaged on an average of once a year. In 1878, Horace, who played the guitar, was courting Lalage Quinn; and as he was serenading her one night, playing "In Old Madrid," Old Man Quinn's dog looked at him and ran away.

Horace never married Lalage, but he says that no matter where he is he will go on serenading her.

Cold Weather Stuff

AD THALIARCHUM

Horace: Book I, Ode 9

"Vides, ut alta stet nive candidum"

I

Soracte's crest is snowy, Thaliarchus;
The weather bureau says, "Continued Cold."
Let's sit around the heater and—in any merry metre—
Imbibe a little stuff that isn't sold.

Why fret about the future, Thaliarchus?
Gather ye roses (Herrick) while ye may!
There's nothing quite so pleasant as the brimming, vivid present;
The time to do your living is Today.

SO THERE!

It's evening on the Campus, Thaliarchus;
The girls are out in couples—yes, in twelves—
I'd make a tidy gamble if we took a little amble
We might run into merriment ourselves.

II

How shining white Soracte shines!
Ice are the streams, the woods are snowy
Decant the best of Sabine wines!
Fill up the grate, the night is blowy.

As to the rest, leave that to them
Who keep the cypresses from shaking.
The sunrise of the next a. m.
Is not a thing of human making.

Youth yet is yours! Scorn not the dance!
Your daily exercise continue;
And don't say there is no Romance
As long as there is breath within you.

COLD WEATHER STUFF

Come, Thaliarchus, let us go
And take a walk upon the Campus,
And give the girls the double-o,
And let them, Thaliarchus, vamp us.

To Mæcenas

Horace: Epode XIV

"Mollis inertia cur tantam diffuderit imis"

Mæcenas, you ask why my versified task
I frankly, defiantly shirk;
You think a Lethean decoction might be an
Excuse for the slump in my work.

It's Cupid whose curse puts a crimp in my verse;
It's Love that has muted my lyre.
Well, didn't Anacreon burn with a—*sacre!*—
Undying, unquenchable fire?

He'd frequently tell as he sang to the shell
How deeply, how hotly he burned.
You needn't act haughty yourself. You've been naughty;
You've sighed and you've ached and you've burned.

TO MÆCENAS

Be glad that the dame who arouses your
flame
Is fairer than Helen of Troy.
For Phryne, a teaser, I fret. But O
Cæsar!
O my! O Mæcenas! O boy!

To the Polyandrous Lydia

Horace: Book I, Ode 13

"Cum tu, Lydia, Telephi—"

Oh Lydia, when I hear you rave
About the arms, the rosy neck
Of Telephus, the vamping knave,
I cry, "Oh heck!"

No longer can I check mine ire;
Unheeded rise the tears that flow
Over my features, with the fire
Of passion's woe.

I weep when on your shoulders white
I see the marks of drunken grips;
The traces of the madman's bite
Upon your lips.

Lydia, my love, attend my song;
Simple it is, nor hieroglyph:
He used you rough, he done you wrong—
The great big stiff!

TO THE POLYANDROUS LYDIA

Thrice happy Jack that holds his Jill
Close to his unpolygamous heart!
Thrice blessèd they who cleave until
Death do them part!

In Praise of Simplicity

Propertius: Book I, Elegy 2

"Quid juvat ornato procedere, vita, capillo et tenuis Coa veste movere sinus?"

Why, my life, delight to go forth
With a permanent wave, and so forth?
Why, my dear, attempt to stir us
With a Coan silk susurrus?

What avails to soak your tresses
In these Syrian myrrhy messes?
Forty tons of bought cosmetic
Cannot make you more æsthetic.

Nothing the modistes can sew you
Fairer than yourself can show you.
Love, undecked, has only loathing
For an art whose end is clothing.

See the colors Earth is showing!
Ivy in its greenness growing,

And the lovely wild arbutus—
How the hues of nature suit us!

See the gems the wanton giver,
Nature, sets along the river;
And the songlets of the birdies
Nor Debussy's are nor Verdi's.

Phœbe flamed the heart of Castor
By no paint nor beauty plaster;
Hillaïra, winning Pollux,
Looked not like the Midnight Frollucks.

Though she wore no rouge nor jewel,
Idas fought a bitter duel
For Evenus's fair daughter,
Phœbus also having sought her.

By no brilliance false or phony
Hippodamia's matrimony
Was achieved; all unbeholden
They to gems and trinkets golden.

Count me equal, bone and sinew,
To the rogues that seek to win you.
Be not quite so free and flirty;
Be content with your Pro*per*tie

SO THERE!

Sing—by Phœbus!—sweetly, gaily!
Strum the Aonian ukulele!
Then, if frippery you'll eschew,
I will stay in love with you.

Thoughts on Spring

Horace: Book I, Ode 4

"Solvitur acris hiems grata vice veris et Favoni"

Gone the days of ten below;
Melted all the winter's snow,
Night- and day-boats sail the river;
Chugs again the farmer's flivver.

Grazes now the lowing cow;
And the rube resumes the plow,
Now, by lunar lumination,
Venus leads a gay saltation.

Twine the flowers, the myrtle green,
Round the redolent, shining bean!
Bring, regardless of the prices,
Lambs or kids for sacrifices.

Ah, the knock of Death is sure
At the door of rich and poor;
As the shades of life grow deeper,
Comes the celebrated Reaper.

SO THERE!

Life, my Sextius, is too short
For a lot of grief or sport.
Darkness, chilly and pneumonic,
Whelms you in the house Plutonic;

Where shall be no merry throws
Of the Galloping Dominoes;
Nor shall Lycidas, the cherished,
Glad the vision of the perished.

Silver Threads Among the Gold

Horace: Book I, Ode 25

"Parcius iunctas quatient fenestras—"

Insistent lads no longer shake
Thy shutters, keeping thee awake,
And no one ever now knocks at
The once willing door into thy flat.

Less frequently the lover cries
"Sleep not, my Lydia! Come, arise!"
The time will come when, old, forlorn,
Thou'lt weep about thy lovers' scorn.

On moonless nights the flames will rage
About thy heart; and, bent with age,
Thou'lt fret that lads delight in myrtle
And ivy more than in thy kirtle.

To Chloë

Book I, Ode 23

"Vitas hinnuleo me similis, Chloë"

Like a frightened fawn, my Chloë,
  Looking for his timid dam,
Fearful of the breezes blowy,
  Come you never where I am.

Tiger am I not nor lion.
  Leave your ma; you're old enough.
Cast your wise and pretty eye on
  Him who wrote this tender stuff.

Lullaby

If, my dear, you seek to slumber,
Count of stars an endless number;
If you still continue wakeful,
Count the drops that make a lakeful;
Then, if vigilance yet above you
Hover, count the times I love you;
And if slumber still repel you,
Count the times I do not tell you.

Valentine

Silver stars above me,
  Sun above me, shine!
Lady, if you love me,
  Be my valentine.

And, my dear, if in you
  Leaps no answering flame,
Those things will continue
  Shining just the same.

On Surveying New Equipment

Mine is a new, a glistening desk;
  And sharp and shiny are my shears;
I have some new and picturesque
    Compeers.

New is the lovely type machine
  On which these limpid lines I write;
All my equipment's new and clean
    And bright.

Yet though the weapons of the game
  Are new, that may not be enough
If I keep on and write the same
    Old stuff.

To a Big Girl

Lady who beneath my window bats the balls about the court,
Shouting in your loud hysteria at the glory of the sport,
Shouting "Ready," "Thirty forty," "That was good," and "What's the score?"
Waking me, unless it's raining, at exactly 7:04:

Lady, as I look this morning at your wide and ample frame,
Moving slowly and ineptly as you try to play the game,
"Though your strength," I muse, "is little, though your tennis skill is scant,
That, to you, is unmomentous; yours is but the wish to bant."

TO A BIG GIRL

Mine the hope you'll be successful if that
be the goal you seek;
Mine the wish—if it be yours—you'll
drop a dozen pounds a week.
Lady, as I lie and listen, comes mine
earnest wish for you:
Just a shadow's what I hope the game
of tennis wears you to.

"When the Hounds of Spring Are on Winter's Traces"

Muriel, as the month of April,
With his celebrated showers,
Fills the fatuously gay prill,
Weeps upon the vernal flowers;
Shines the sun a little stronger,
Grow the nights a little short-
Er, the days a little longer
For the purposes of sport.

Lisp the leaves—you know your Swinburne?
Wakes the year—you know your Gray?
And the sun that makes the skin burn
Beams upon the links to-day.
Pipe the shepherds in the meadow;
Grow the grasses; melts the ice;
And the couch, or Li'l Ol' Beddo,
Seems particularly nice.

THE HOUNDS OF SPRING

Rain and sun are softly blended;
  Blows the gentle breeze and warm;
Bitter winter now has ended;
  Gone the days of snow and storm.
O my Muriel, at the shore, on
  All the mountains it is spring!
Which is known to every moron
  Who has ever read a thing.

Ballade of a Polygamous Heart

Sylvia, Gwendolyn, and Flo;
Janet and Marie;
Hilda, Mary Jane, and Jo;
Belle, Andromache;
Frances, Katharine, and Bee;
Blanche and Caroline;
Gladys, Emma, Lalage—
Be my Valentine!

Ethel, Edna, Doris, O-
Phelia, Dorothy,
Winifred, Keziah, Lo-
La, Penelope,
Maida, Margaret, and Ney-
Sa and Geraldine;
Sally, Ruth, and Emily—
Be my Valentine!

Mrs. Adams, Mrs. Trow,
Mrs. Cassidy,
Miss McComas, Miss LeVeau,
Mrs. McAttee,
Mrs. Ferber, Miss DuPree,
Mrs. Rosenstein,
Mrs. Glass and Miss McGee—
Be my Valentine!

L'ENVOI

Queens and princesses, to ye
Goes this heart of mine;
Willow waly, woe is me!
Be my Valentine!

The Atmospheric Complex

Give me the balmy breezes!
  Give me the raging storm!
Give me the gale that freezes!
  Give me the zephyrs warm!

Give me the searing tropic
  Wind on my cheek and hair!
And, while we're on the topic,
  Give me the air.

A Cure for Insomnia

Laura, my love, when you recite
With azure orbs ashine, aglisten,
The dream you had the other night,
I do not listen.

My Postumus, when you explain
The virtues of your car; how cheap
Its upkeep is, I cannot feign . . .
I fall asleep.

And when, Belinda, you essay
To tell me of the current shows,
Weaving the plot of every play,
My dear, I doze.

And when, O John, you tell this bard
Of poker pots you used to take—
With all details—well, I can hard-
Ly keep awake.

SO THERE!

Trite though these tales, my sweet Miss
Smith,
Gold are they from a fairy hoard,
To your experiences with
The Ouija board.

Spring Roses and Thorns

Spring, with her proverbial fires,
(*I shall have to buy some tires*),
Warms me to my vernal singing.
(*Both my racquets need restringing.*)

Now from winter's fastness freed,
(*Oh, the summer suit I need!*)
Comes the spring, destroying reason.
(*Oh, my shoes of yesterseason!*)

Welcome, spring, and winter, hence!
(*Tennis balls cost fifty cents.*)
Spring is here, O sweet my coz!
(*Roses, seven bucks a doz.*)

To Señor Vicente Blasco Ibáñez

["Every American man is afraid of his wife. . . . Every American man has a mental picture of his wife standing behind the door with a rolling pin, either literally or figuratively, speaking, according to social standards. What the country needs is a second emancipator.]—Señor Vicente Blasco Ibáñez.

Man of Andalusian letters,
When you speak about the gyves
And the shackles and the fetters
Put upon us by our wives;
When you tell us we are made of
Weak and malleable clay,
And assert we are afraid of
Those whom we obey;

When you say our one ambition
Is to mollify and please;
That our usual position
Is upon our bended knees;

When you tell us that the tearful
Woman melts the icy heart,
That we quiver, ever fearful
Lest the storm may start;

When you say we ought to beat 'em,
Ought to pull the cave man stuff;
That our duty is to treat 'em,
As the vulgar have it, rough—
With the things that you observe I'd
Be the last to pick a fight,
If I only had the nerve, I'd
Say that you were right.

It Might Have Been

If Henry Wadsworth Longfellow had been F. Scott Fitzgerald.

Maiden! with the glistening eyes,
Wherein belladonna lies,
Lamping, vamping all the guys!

Thou whose locks, as black as tar,
Once outshone the vesper star,
Waved and bobbed and darkened are!

Standing, with exotic feet,
At Broadway and Warren Street,
Kid, I'll say thou'rt pretty sweet!

If Francis W. Bourdillon had been J. V. A. Weaver.

Some starry night it is. I'll say it is.
Must be a million twinklers out to-night;
But it got dark just as the sun went down.

IT MIGHT HAVE BEEN

Say, kid, this is the way I dope it out:
I got a million twinklers in my nut
To think with; and one single beatin'
heart.

But—get me—I don't grant the bean a
thing,
But if you put the rollers under me
Or said, "Lay off!" I'll tell the world
I'd croak.

Three Cheers: A Patriotic Poem

I

Sometimes o' this here country I don't
feel too all-fired proud,
An' then I git to thinkin' an' I say there
ain't no cloud
But it has a silver linin', an' your
"Uncle Dudley" knows
There ain't no thorn without nearby
there also is a rose.
So when I git to worryin', an' I'm
heartsick an' depressed
Because the Nation's favorite poet is
this here Eddie Guest,
I steal a crumb o' comfort that dispels
my salty tears:
Eddie Guest was born in England, an'
I give three rousin' cheers.

II

My heart sinks pretty dadburned low when I, a patriot, am faced with what the people like; and so I rail about the public taste. I read the junk that poets sing in papers and in magazines, and yell, "The folks don't know a thing and solid ivory are their beans. They want no pep, they want no salt, they just want predigested hay; their favorite poet's Uncle Walt, who sings the same song every day. A bunch of boobs," I sadly thought, "the folks of these United States! They fall for this Masonic rot that on my finer senses grates." But Walt was born in Canaday, and so my tabors and my pipes a patriotic tune will play the while I sing "The Stars and Stripes."

SO THERE!

III

My soul is sick of Alaska Dick and
Perilous Yukon Ben,
And my stomach reels at the faro deals
up there where men are men;
And I'm sicker than hell of Painted Nell
and the woman whose life is waste,
And my throat goes dry as I scream and
cry, "A curse on the public taste!"
But, pal, a word: This Service bird, as
I learned the other day,
Is a British guy. "Hooray," say I,
"Hooray for the U. S. A.!"

Folk Songs

I

(*From the Liberian*)

Hush, little child,
Weep no longer;
Lie here on your mother's arm,
Softly,
Hush, little child.

II

(*From the Ecuadorian of Rinaldo Moreno**)

Weep no longer, little child,
Hush.
Lie softly here
On your mother's arm.
Hush, little child.

*Rinaldo Moreno, Ecuador's foremost poet (1829–1898), was born at Vermecelli, a hamlet hard by Quinto, in 1829. His parents were poor peasants, but young Moreno worked his way through the University of Ecuador, where his lyric ability won him the distinction of being class poet. The "Lullaby" is perhaps his best known poem, its poignant simplicity and sheer arrestingness giving it a stark distinction.

SO THERE!

III

(*From the Brazilian of Donald McTavish**)

Hush, little child,
Slumber softly
On your mother's arm.
Do not cry.
Hush, little child.

*Mr. McTavish was born in Rio de Janeiro in 1829. He is still living there and, although "Lullaby" is his best known poem, he has published a large volume of verse, entitled "Poems." He never has had any children, and the uncannily keen imagination shown in "Lullaby" is considered remarkable by most critics.

Glee

(*In the following song, the music to which is Sullivan's, C signifies Capital and L Labor*)

See how the Fates their gifts allot,
For C is happy—L is not.
Yet L is worthy, you'll agree,
Of more prosperity than C.
Is L more worthy?
Oh, dear me!
He ought to have far more than C.

Yet C is happy!
Oh, so happy!
Jeering, Ha! ha!
Fleering, Ha! ha!
Profiteering, Ha! ha! ha! ha!
Ever joyous, gay, and free,
Happy, undeserving C!

If I were Fortune—which I'm not—
L should enjoy C's happy lot,

And C should languish in a cell,
That is, assuming I am L.
But *should* C languish?
    Ay, in hell!
(Of course, assuming I am L.)

L should be happy!
  Oh, so happy!
Smiting, Ha! ha!
Fighting, Ha! ha!
Dynamiting, Ha! ha! ha! ha!
But in misery he must dwell,
Wretched, meritorious L!

From the Health Anthology

Curlilocks, Curlilocks, wilt thou be mine?
A piece of dry toast every morning at nine,
And sit on a cushion and sew a fine seam,
And cut out all butter fats, sugar, and cream.

* * * * *

Pat-a-cake, pat-a-cake, baker's man,
Bake me some gluten as fast as you can;
Tuesday I had but a jigger of tea,
And half of an orange for Tommy and me.

* * * * *

Simple Simon met a pieman
On one of the principal streets.
Said Simple Simon to the pieman,
"I dassen't eat no sweets."

* * * * *

SO THERE!

Sing a song of proteins,
A pocket full of rye;
Four-and-twenty calories
Boiled in a pie.

When the pie was opened
The birds began to bleat:
"Isn't that a dreadful dish
For any one to eat?"

* * * * *

Old Mother Hubbard went to the cupboard
To get her poor self some dinner;
She had butter and lamb and some pastry and ham,
And that's why she didn't get thinner.

* * * * *

Little Tommy Tucker
Yearns for his supper:
What may he eat?
Toast without butter.

* * * * *

Tom, Tom, the piper's son,
Stole a pig and away he run;

"Go on," said he to his wife, "and fry it."
"Nope," said she; "you're on a diet."

* * * * *

There was a man in our town,
And he was wondrous wise;
He was overweight, and so he took
A lot of exercise.

And when he lost a lot of weight,
With all his might and main
He rushed into a restaurant
And put it on again.

* * * * *

Jack Sprat could eat no fat;
Eat sweets? He was unable.
And people used to say of him
He set a skimpy table.

* * * * *

Mary had a little ham,
Some chicken à la King,
Some eggs supreme, a glass of cream,
And not another thing.

A Not Too Deep Sea Chantey

Then it's O to be on the salty sea with
the breeze abaft my cheek!
And it's O for the sport of the wind
aport (or a-lee) for about a week!
As the passengers walk on the deck and
talk of matters wild or tame,
And seven or eight of us fool with fate
in a seven-day poker game!

Beachcomber's Chantey

Sing ho! sing hey! for the salty spray
And the billows that break and roar!
Sing three times thrice for the bath-
house price—
A couple of bucks or more!

Sing hey! sing ho! for the tide that's low!
Sing hey! for the sloop and barge!
Sing biff! sing bam! for the costly clam!
Sing high! for the cover charge!

Sing ho! sing hey! for the Sabbath day!
Sing hey! for the waves that foam!
Chant any old thing you choose to sing,
But leave this bard at home.

The Vermilion Blues

I ain't been deprived of my best gal;
I don't want to go to Mich. or Cal.;
I got all I want to eat and drink,
But it makes me mournful when I think—
I say it makes me sad enough to sing and shout,
"I haven't got a thing to have the blues about."
There is not a
Dog-goned thing;
I ain't got a
Blue to sing,
And I cannot weep, I said I cannot bawl,
Because I got no blues at all.

On Barbers

The barber held the mirror up behind
So I might see the way I looked in back
And approve and praise the wonder of his art
Yet—as I have observed a hundred times—
Suppose I should not like what he had done,
Suppose I said, "Well, that's a rotten haircut,"
Would it improve the appearance of my neck?

And as the barber held the mirror up
I thought how like to Consciousness was that,
To Consciousness, and Life, and the Universe.
The mirror is held up for us to look
And if we like it not, what can we do?
Nothing at all. We cannot even say,
"Oh, well, next time I'll get another barber."

Sehnsucht

She gazes across at the Palisades,
With a dull and lustreless eye;
And hope within her flickers and fades,
And she draws a minor sigh.

Yearnful her gaze, and deep and fond,
As she looks across the hills,
And she seems to long for a land beyond
And the splash of daffodils.

She lifts her eyes to the great above,
And watches the misty gray;
And I think her heart is abrim with love
Of a dead and happier day.

Of a day when she roamed on the Open Road,
When the boundless plain was hers,
When the prairie sweep was her abode
And her carpet the grass and furze.

SEHNSUCHT

"Oh, why do you gaze, my dear, my dear,
And muse on the misty sky?"
"I'm afraid that it isn't going to clear,
And we won't get the washing dry."

To Polyandra

Lady, listen to me;
  Hearken to my cry:
Yours a heart that's roomy.
  Tell me why.

Yours a head replete with
  Thoughts of many men;
Making each compete with
  Eight or ten.

Think on this idea:
  [*Vox humana* stop]
Yours should really be a
  One-man top.

Destitution

Whene'er I take my walks abroad
How many poor I see!
I weep for Ethel, May, and Maude,
And curse their poverty.

I've seen a girl whose heels were worn,
And one whose scarf was frayed;
I've glimpsed a maid whose veil was torn,
Whose gown was ready-made.

But on the subway yestere'en
Sight not to be forgotten!
Oh Poverty! I saw a queen
With stockings made of cotton.

The Mercenary Lover

Sing me a song of the South, my love,
Of dear old Dixie land;
Where flowers are abloom and skies above
And the climate's pretty grand;
Where the mocking birds and the cuckoos flit
All day from tree to tree.
Make me a song like that, and split
The royalties with me.

From the Freudian's "Sylvie and Bruno"

She dreamed she saw a coach-and-four
A-standing by her bed;
She looked again and dreamed it was
A horse without a head.
"I guess I'll be psych-analyzed"
The little lady said.

The Flappers' Freudian Song Book

"Come where my love lies dreaming,"
That song our parents enjoyed.
But now, her bright eyes beaming,
My love reads Old Doc Freud.

* * * * *

Last night as I lay on my pillow,
Last night as I lay in my bed—
Last night as I lay on my pillow,
I dreamed of Alonzo and Fred.

* * * * *

I dreamt that I dwelt in marble halls,
With Herbert and Al by my side;
I dreamed I was passing Niagara Falls
And I was a joyous young bride.
I dreamed of a tree and a ship and a fire,
And a garden with ten high walls;
And it means that for years I've suppressed a desire
For nothing like marble halls.

Thrift Mottoes for Framing

For Thrift Week

Save, and the world saves with you;
Spend, and you need a loan;
And it ain't a bad bet you can probably get
It from some one who wasn't a drone.

* * * * *

If you have an extra dollar,
Save it!
Do not give away your collar—
Save it!
It is wonderfully nice
When you always have the price.
If you like to give advice,
Save it!

The Poets Revised for Smile Week

Oh, why should the spirit of mortal be sad?
Like a slow-going hearse or a moribund shad?
What matters injustice, what boots unemployment?
Let's smile for a week in unbridled enjoyment.

* * * * *

Home they brought her warrior dead,
But she smiled and smiled and smiled.

* * * * *

Be gay, sweet maid, and let who will be tearful;
Do merry things and think them all the while;
And so make woe and death a glad and cheerful
And broad sweet smile.

* * * * *

Beautiful Evelyn Hope is dead!
Sit and watch by her side a minute
Let something helpfully sweet be said:
Never a tear but a smile was in it.

* * * * *

She lived unknown, and few could know
When Lucy ceased to be;
But she is in her grave. Ho! ho!
Tee hee! tee hee! tee hee!

The Strange Case of Alonzo Benjamin O'Toole and Edgar Arthur Abbott

Alonzo Benjamin O'Toole was plain and puritanical;
His bent was all for engines and for other things mechanical.
A graduate of M.I.T., that thoroughgoing school,
No student in his class knew more than Engineer O'Toole.

No trouble in a motor car, with all its wild vexatiousness
Could ever fret Alonzo's wide and excellent capaciousness.
He knew a cam-shaft from a brake, a piston from a plug;
He had the mind, he had the hands that mark the Motor Bug.

Now Edgar Arthur Abbott was Ineptitude personified;
It wasn't any pose with him—his ignorance was bona fide.
His least attempt at manual things was always bound to fail.
"A motor car?" he used to say. "I couldn't drive a nail."

One day they took a motor ride, and something failed to generate.
They raised the hood; they got the tools and tinkered and—at any rate,
Who was it made the engine go so sweet and strong and cool?
Our hero, as you may have guessed, Alonzo B. O'Toole.

Poetry and Thoughts on Same

I sit here at the window
  This Tuesday afternoon,
In the editorial room
  Of the New York *Tribune*.

I hear upon the cobbles
  The tramp of horses' feet;
The newsboys' loud obscenenesses
  Here in Frankfort Street.

The echoes of their voices
  Back to me are hurled
From the brownstone walls of the
    building
  Of the New York *World*.

I see the business office,
  And I see the floor above it.
I see and hear a lot of things.
  Suppose I do. What of it?

"What of it?" Ignoramus!
  That obviously shows
How little I know of Poetry,
  How all my thoughts are Prose.

"What of it?" If I said that,
  Were I so analytic
About the Modern Poetry,
  You'd cry, "A rotten critic!"

Yet that is what I think about
  This Tuesday afternoon
In the editorial room
  Of the New York *Tribune*.

Christmas Greetings for 1923

There was a man in our town
And he was wondrous wise;
He said he'd never send a Christmas
Card to any guys.

But when he opened up his mail
From many friends and cousins,
He jumped into a stationer's shop
And sent out several dozens.

An Echo of the War

I purchased scores of Liberty 4s when
the Hun was at the gate,
And I bought cigars at war bazars, and
I paid a dollar straight.
The bread I had was pretty bad, but
the soldiers needed the wheat;
And—it seems like a dream—but I used
no cream, and my coffee was far from
sweet.
Contributed I with a will to the Y.; to
the Am. Red Cross I gave,
When I was a dub at Neufchâteau and
my wife was a Washington slave.
Now I'm not sore at the silly old war—I
go where duty bids;
But what became of the old tin foil I
gave to the Belgian kids?

I'm not the kind to keep in mind the
wrongs of a bygone day.
I can take a bath in the grapes of wrath
and emerge debonair and gay.

SO THERE!

The forgivingest guy in the world am I,
and seldom I bear a grudge;
And I often sing to myself, "Old thing,
who are you that you should judge?"
But once in a while I lose my smile,
and I bite on my cigar,
And you'll maybe learn that the worm
can turn, and I can be pushed so far.
For this is what gets me wild and hot
till I grind my teeth and dance:
Whatever became of that old tin foil
I gave to the kids of France?

My bonds are low, but I let that go—
I never was one to bawl,
Though the things I thought were what
I fought for weren't the things at all.
I pay my tax and I make no cracks at
the ridiculous government;
If I knew how to adjust the row, perhaps
I'd be President.
When liquor quite disappeared from
sight I raised no protesting voice,
And if Sundays blue should be our due,
I'll dutifully rejoice;

But Berserker ire sets me afire with a
flame that can't be hid,
When I wonder who got that old tin
foil and what miserable good it did.

Song

You ask me why I love you, sweet,
What makes me worship at your feet.

You tell me why this hawthorn tree
Produced the blossoms that you see;

And tell me why these thrushes here
Are making music for your ear;

You tell me why the sky is blue—
And then, perhaps, I'll answer you.
—WAYNE GARD, in the Chicago *Tribune*.

Nay, I can tell the reason of
My logicless and reverent love:

I know not why the hawthorn tree
Produced the blossoms that I see;

Nor know I why these thrushes here
Are making music for mine ear;

But oh, my love, the sky is blue
Because it's far away from you.

The Drama

I once saw a gentleman wallop his wife;
I've heard a girl holler "You brute!"
I've heard a non-poet say something was "rife,"
And I once knew a child who was "cute."
I once heard a humorist say something subtler
Than what he wrote down on a page;
But I've never heard one philosophical butler
Except on the stage.

I've heard an articulate guard on the L;
And a negro who couldn't play tunes;
I once saw an audience silent at "Hell!"
And not even giggle at "Prunes."
I once knew a lady but honorable bettor,
And a girl who would *not* tell her age;
But I never saw anyone crumple a letter
Except on the stage.

Kingsley Revised

My fairest child, I have advice to slip you;
No saxophone could zoom a snappier lay;
And, if you will, a noisy hint I'll tip you
For use to-day.

I'll tell you how to sing a jazzier carol
Than those of I. Berlin or Jerry Kern;
Your useless bits of feminine apparel
You ought to burn.

Be wild, sweet child, and let who will be quiet;
Do noisy things, and give the boys the razz;
And so make Life, a syncopated riot,
One grand old jazz.

To Arizona and Return

Henry Schwartz was an expert watch-repairer.
You could see him in the window of the Sixth Avenue shop any day;
Any day and every day.
He'd been hard at it since 1899.
This spring his daughter, who lives in Arizona, induced him to visit her for a week.
Among the week's excursions was a trip to the Grand Canyon.
Schwartz thought it was all right but nothing to rave about—
When you saw one piece of scenery you saw them all.
The day he got back to the shop a man brought in a watch to be repaired.
"Say," said Henry, "that is the most beautiful main-spring I ever saw in my life."

A Fair Crumpler

When they say "How's the boy?" I
can answer;
When they ask "How is tricks?" I
reply;
When a garrulous bird asks me "What's
the good word?"
I'm there with a snappy "Good-by."
When they greet me with "Well, what's
the scandal?"
I can tell 'em without getting dizzy;
But I never know how to respond to the
brow
Who says, "Well, are they keeping
you busy?"

"Girl for Illusions"

Girl for illusions. Give full particulars in first letter, salary expected, etc. Photos required; same returned. Write K. E. Jones, Broughton, Kansas.—*The Billboard.*

"Girl for illusions." K. E. Jones,
Thy message clear from Broughton,
Kansas,
"Like one clear harp in divers tones,"
Leads me to spill some stanzas.

Much have I traveled, much I've read,
And men have bared to me their
hearts;
I know the thoughts of Mazie's head,
Her sciences and arts.

Oh, K. E. Jones, deem me no churl,
But, on this famed terrestrial ball,
Nobody ever wants a girl
For anything else at all.

Health and the Vision

When I am full of zip, and strong,
When to my lips the ready song
Unsummoned springs; when I can see
Clear-eyed the world, and you, and me;
Then do I see a world unjust,
Few persons worthy love and trust;
And sometimes things appear so bad
That I see carmine, and get mad;
And, full of strength and indignation,
Pen some satiric observation.

When I am reft of pep, and weak,
When fevered is mine ardent cheek,
Then is my vision dulled, and I
See all the universe awry.
Then do I see a world unfair,
And, with a heart bowed by despair
At all the selfishness and greed,
Bitter I grow, I do, indeed.
And ill and weak, as I'm at present,
I write some verses far from pleasant.

To a Lady

Many a fairer face than yours,
  Many a keener mind,
Many a girl with added lure
  Isn't hard to find.

Yours no face to launch a ship,
  Yours no lovely tress;
Downy cheek or carmine lip
  You do not possess.

Yours is not the charm of youth;
  Yours nor grace nor wit.
And I—since you want the truth—
  Don't like you a bit.

The Newer Heroines

Sweet Alice

Oh, have you observed your sweet Alice,
Ben Bolt—
Sweet Alice with hair now so titian?
She screams with delight when you play
her some jazz,
And to toddle all night is her ambition.
She swims and she rides and she motors,
Ben Bolt;
She smokes, and she wallops the ball;
And to-night when I asked her about
you, Ben Bolt,
Why, she didn't remember you at
all—
When I asked her to-night how about
you, Ben Bolt,
Why, she failed to recall you at all.

* * * * *

Jenny

Jenny kiss'd 'em when they met—
Otto, Cedric, Aleck, Eddie,
Bennie, Jimmy, Allen, Chet,
Eustace, Henry, Bert, and Freddie.
I'm a novice at the game;
I don't understand the system
As that polyandrous dame,
Jenny, kissed 'em.

On "In American," by John V. A. Weaver

Las' night I read this book o' Johnny Weaver's;
Some little book it is, I'll tell the world.
Some writin' goof he is, I'll say he is.
The name o' this here book is "In American."
Now make me: This here Weaver, hear me tellin' ye,
Has got it over lots o' writin' birds.
He says a face full, an' he says it straight;
Lays off the mush, the hokum—if you get me.
None o' this Heart o' Gold beneath a Rough
Outside. This Weaver's guys talk reg'lar talk,
His janes get off the chatter like they spill

ON "IN AMERICAN"

To me—an' you, unless you kid your-
self.
Say, listen: If this Weaver was a frog,
Er if he come a lecturin' from London,
You'd yelp yer nut off, "Ain't the fella
quaint?
His stuff is, like they say, from out o'
the soil.
Too bad America ain't got no writers."
Wha'd'ye mean too bad? You make
me sick.

A Fable for Critics

Says he that a book or play
Merit hath, a crowd will say,
"Roller he of logs, the crook,
Thus to boost a play or book!"

Says he of some written stuff,
"This is hokum, bunk, and guff,"
"This," they'll cry, "is merely spite!"
"You're a crab," Anon. will write.

Says he, "This is pretty fair,"
"He's afraid," the folks declare.
"Lacks the nerve of his convictions;
Fears the publisher's restrictions."

Critics of the books and play,
Heed not what the crowd will say.
Praise or wallop, rave or fuss. . . .
No one really cares a cuss.

In the Chestertonian Manner

Mr. Chesterton has written "Old King Cole" in the manner of various other writers. Therefore—

Now Cole was King of Connecticut,
And he was a merry soul,
He lived in Lyme in the summer time,
And thus he made his dole:

"What ho! my pipe!" said Old King Cole.
Replied the Puritan folk:
"No pipe for you where laws are blue
And it's counted a sin to smoke."

"What ho! my glass!" said Old King Cole.
Replied the Puritan tribe:
"We do not think it wise to drink,
Absorb, inhale, imbibe."

"My fiddlers three!" cried Old King
Cole.
Replied the Puritans: "Nay!
The Heavenly Maid is a wicked jade.
We deem it a sin to play."

So Old King Cole of Connecticut
Nor wept nor tore his hair,
But, merry and old, his throne he sold
And went away from there.

The Patriot

I profiteered throughout the war,
I profiteered for two years more.
And when the people asked me why
I kept my prices up so high,
I told them that I had to make
A profit for my country's sake.

And nowadays when prices fall,
I tell the people one and all
That everyone who buys and buys
Will help the nation stabilize.
Be prices low, be prices high,
None loves his country more than I.

De Senectute

When as a young and budding pote
I gazed upon the stuff I wrote,
I knew that stuff so weak and poor
Would never rank as Literature.

And yet, I thought, what I have sung
Is not so bad for one so young;
When years and ripeness shall be mine,
I may achieve the Mighty Line.

And in that withered yesteryear
I used to take unwonted cheer
In that De Morgan was a man
Of seventy when he began.

But now that years have bowed my bean
And I am more than seventeen,
I tell myself the bitter truth
And know I was a lying youth.

DE SENECTUTE

Now of my verse so thin and cold
I say, Not bad for one so old;
When I was twenty-four or -five
Then, then my verses were alive.

Now I, as creeping age defeats
Me, think of Chatterton or Keats,
And say, Look at the stuff he did,
When he was nothing but a kid!

But Time has taught me this, to wit:
That Age has naught to do with it,
That plenty be the years or scant,
Some can be poets, and some can't.

The Found Chord

Standing one day at the saxophone,
I was peppy and full of booze,
And my fingers wandered madly
Playing "The Blah Blah Blues."

I knew just what I was playing,
And what I had swiped it from;
And I stole one strain of music
And I said to myself, "Ho! hum!"

I stole six bars from Wagner,
Seven from Rubinstein;
And I said, "I'll bet I can sell this
Melody that is mine."

And a music publisher heard it
And said, in a way he has:
"I'll tell the world you've got a hit;
Oh kid, that is some jazz."

And the thing sold in the millions,
And brought me wealth and fame;
And the blush of pride was on my cheek,
But never the blush of shame.

It may be that Richard Wagner,
And Anton von Rubinstein
Are turning in their graves now,
But the royalties are mine.

De Amicitia

Dear friend, whose merry Christmas
card
Came yestermorning to my view,
Wishes this weary, daily bard
The same to you.

You put me on your annual list
As though you wished me to recall
The simple fact that you exist
On earth at all.

I hold that lying is a crime;
I haven't thought of you, old bean,
A single thought since Christmas time
Nineteen Nineteen.

Perhaps our lives have gone askew;
The town is full of lights and lures.
I have my various jobs to do,
And you have yours.

Why not take up, old friend of mine,
The threads? . . . Or, if you like,
old kicks,
Ignore each other till Christmas Nine-
Teen Twenty Six?

To My Fountain Pen

O fluent fountain pen of mine,
Methought once that the mighty line
Was not to be inscribed by thee,
But now the light has come to me.

The other night, at half-past ten,
"Hey, leave me take your fountain pen!"
Said Edna Ferber. And she wrote
Some stuff posterity may quote.

"O grant me of thy benefice,"
Said Zona Gale, of Portage, Wis.,
"The loan of that there monster quill."
"Why, sure, Miss Gale," I said, "I will."

And then she wrote, with this here plume,
Phrases that flower and words that bloom.

TO MY FOUNTAIN PEN

"Your courtesy I shan't forget,"
Said she who wrote "Miss Lulu Bett."

And Mr. Ade said, "Leave me take
That fountain pen of yours." (To
make,
Perchance, a line as sound and sure
As ever dented Literature.)

And so, fair fountain pen of mine,
Thou canst inscribe the mighty line.
Perhaps, if such a thing can be,
The difficulty lies with me.

After Reading a Lot of Poetry

My life is not a mirrored sea,
  Nor yet a limpid lake;
Life is no mass of type to me,
  And not a printer's take.
My life's not like a virgin page,
  Unlike a summer's night;
My life is not an empty stage,
  Nor an electric light.

Your life, my love, is not a dream,
  Nor eke a field of corn;
Your life's not like a threaded seam,
  Nor like a dewy morn.
Nor jagged saw nor cutting knife
  Your life reminds me of;
Unlike the pearly tear your life,
  Unlike a smile, my love.

My life is far from like a lake,
  As I observed before.
Yours is unlike an angel cake,
  A table, or a door.

AFTER READING POETRY

My life is not a ball or strike,
Yours is no beaded purse.
I don't know what our lives are like,
So how can I write verse?

Dulcinea Goes in for Verse

I don't know about Art,
  But I know what I like:
Not the mind but the heart.
I don't know about Art.
Say, this Flagg's pretty smart;
  You can have your Van Dyck.
I don't know about Art,
  But I know what I like.

When you want the police,
  They are never around.
Though the hold-ups increase,
When you want the police
The preservers of peace
  Are nowhere to be found.
When you want the police,
  They are *never* around.

When I go to a play,
  It's amusement I look for.
I want something that's gay
When I go to a play.

Why, I worry all day—
  What's a show or a book for?
When I go to a play,
  It's amusement I look for.

If you only could write
  Half as well as you talk!
I was saying last night
If you only could write
Half as well, why you might
  Be the best in New Yawk.
If you only could write
  Half as well as you talk!

Jealousy

Lady, the laugh that rippled from your lips
Was such as Chloë might have laughed in Thrace—
A laugh as certain as a swallow dips,
As sure of grace.

Such notes as on a golden harp the wind
Might once have played (See Bulfinch, Æolus),
I turned to see your face. (You sat behind
Me on the bus).

Yours was the face that launched a thousand ships;*
A thousand eyes like yours hath but the night;†
Was Beauty's ensign crimson in your lips,‡
Your teeth were white.

*Marlowe. †Bourdillon. ‡Shakespeare.

But not the celebrated babbling spring
Bandusia* boasted had a ripple half
So clearly sweet. I never heard a thing
Fair as your laugh.

Gazed I upon the rouser of your smile,
On him whose words provoked that lovely pearled
And lyric mirth. He was a dub, so I'll
Inform the world.

Dulness and smugness sat upon that bird;
And emptiness filled all his silly face;
Trite was his talk; his every uttered word
Was commonplace.

And as you listened to him verbify,
And laughed at him whose wheezes should have pained you,
What music you'd have made, I mused, if *I*
Had entertained you!

*Horace.

The Business Situation

Consider Andy Bloggins,
  One of the business kings
Who eight long brimming years has made
  Great profit selling things.

"How came your swelling fortune,
  Your growing pile of pelf?"
Asked one; and Bloggins answered,
  "I made it all myself."

"Conspicuous acumen
  Is mine for gleaning gold.
The merchandise I bought at low
  At high I always sold."

Consider Andy Bloggins,
  His views on dwindling trade.
The second week of lower returns
  These utterances he made:

"A curse on all the public
That made this dread condition,
Arising from the Democrats,
The Reds, and Prohibition!

"For something like a week now
I haven't earned my salt,
Although I work and work and work,
It's all the public's fault."

Asserted Andy Bloggins,
One of the business kings
Who eight long brimming years had made
Great profit selling things.

Winter

Somewhat in the Calverley manner

Janet, as the month of Janus
(As I term it) comes to close,
Seek I now the verse incanous
As a substitute for prose.
For, though you may find it tedium,
And may grudge the treasured time,
I prefer the metric medium,
And I choose the chains of rhyme.

These, my Janet, are the days I
Rise without a hint of haste;
Take the frigid plunge with quasi
Fear and tremulous distaste;
These the days when I would rather
Lie the day in bed than lave;
When I whip the mollient lather
For the matutinal shave.

WINTER

These the days I do not trek fast
From my far too costly flat;
When I dawdle with my breakfast,
Speaking kindly to the cat;
When, replete with melting pity,
For the master of my fate,
I contrive to reach the city
Irremediably late—

When, a zealous lyric smiter,
I essay to sing a song,
And an editorial writer
Talks to me the whole day long;
When I read the final galley-
Proof and pen the ultimate line
With the knowledge that the Valley
Of Contentment isn't mine;

Low morale is mine on these days
Of alternate rain and snow,
Chilly days and melt-and-freeze days—
My morale, I say, is low.
If, my Janet, you can reason
As you read me, it may strike
You that Winter is a season
I enormously dislike.

SO THERE!

Janet, yours the fervent query
As to how I feel these days:
Winter finds me overweary,
Void of song and reft of phrase.
Weary of this piffling planet,
Of this ever-whirling wheel,
That, I've tried to tell you, Janet,
Is about the way I feel.

The Real Interest

Any work can be started now if the man who has it to do is really interested in getting it over.—John Blake in the *Evening World*.

When I begin, at an early hour,
To try to assemble The Conning Tower,
I always have a terrible time
To get a start with an opening rhyme.

I read the papers and I stare at the wall,
And I look out the window, and otherwise stall,
And I write a line with my fountain pen,
And remember that I wrote it back in Nineteen Ten.

Then I cross it out, and I take my gloom
And go for a visit to the City Room.
I come back to my desk and try to write
Enough to fill a column by eleven at night.

SO THERE!

Now, regarding the observances of Old
John Blake,
I have the following statement to make:
I find it pretty hard to get the stuff
begun
When my real and only interest is in
getting it done.

The Seasons

Mabel, when the season vernal—
Better known, perhaps, as Spring—
Comes, I hate the job diurnal
Like—forgive me!—anything.
In the spring I hope the paper 'ill
Give me leave to go away
For the smiling month of April
And the merry month of May.

When the sun of Summer scorches
On the court and on the links,
Yearn I then to lie on porches,
Cooled by effervescent drinks.
Sweeter far to stir the rickey
And absorb the citric lime
Than to chase the cheap and picay-
Unely meretricious rhyme.

SO THERE!

In the dwindling days autumnal—
In, if I may say so, Fall—
I detest the task columnal
Worst, if possible, of all.
Lures me then the primrose path of
Dalliance; then would I immerse
All my being in a bath of
Almost anything but verse.

But, my Mabel, in the Winter's
Unalluring cold and wet,
I delight to give the printers
All the stuff that they can set.
Work—in Winter I enjoy it;
Fast the dullest evening flees
When I foolishly employ it
On innocuous rhymes like these.

Lines Written in Candor, with a Copy of "The Complete Works of Charles Stuart Calverley," to a Lady

Dottie, who sincerely dottest
With thy praise this lute of mine,
Deeming me, thou say'st, the hottest
Bard that sings the mighty line:

Dottie, jocund-hearted Dottie,
I was never one to find
Maculate the shield unspotty,
Clouds upon the clearest mind.

When thou set'st the blithesome bay so
Sweetly on my blushing brow,
I were graceless to gainsay so
Keen a lit'ry judge as thou;

To deny thy fairest, latest
Utterance (January 5),
Calling me about the greatest
Minnesinger now alive.

SO THERE!

Ruder I than any churlish
Oaf to look for any flaws
In simplicity so girlish,
In so sweet—to me—applause.

Here, upon a silver salver,
Find my heart; and with it find
All the works of C. S. Calver-
Ley, the greatest of his kind.

And whene'er thou read'st this volume
Of the verse of C. S. C.,
May'st thou know how good this colyum
Actually ought to be!

To Annie, Gone but Not Forgotten

It's weeks since you left our attractive abode—
The reason you went I've forgotten.
I recall that you couldn't cook beef à la mode;
I remember your pastry was rotten.

Your bacon was soft and your steaks overdone;
Your coffee was bitter and muddy;
The muffins you baked averaged ten to the ton,
And never a cookbook you'd study.

And yet you were gentle, dear Annie, and kind.
I wept when you told us you'd leave us,
For cooks from the country aren't easy to find—
You came from Cohoes or Schenevus.

SO THERE!

That $3.25 on my telephone bill
Was a long distance call, and you made it
To get your new job. . . . I'm a sport, but I will
Admit that I winced when I paid it.

To a Little Boy

Part of Eddie Guest's job as a father is to play with his son, "Bud." He may be busy on his other job of writing verses and articles, the job at which he makes a living. But if "Bud" says, "Aw, gee! you're always workin' when I want to play," that settles it; forty-year-old Father limbers up his knees and gets down to the biggest business of life, which is being a comrade to his ten-year-old boy.— *The American Magazine.*

May you have of life the best,
Little son of Eddie Guest!
Loom ahead the bitter years
Full of labor and of tears.
Time enough to work and study
When you're old as Daddy, Buddy.
Be it ball or marbles, play
All the merry summer day.
Nor forget to holler, "Stop
Workin' an' play with me, Pop!"
Make him stop, and how secure,
Bud, your place in Literature!

Perversity

When cosmic matters fill the world
And Governments about are hurled,
I note that men of every age
Turn first to read the sporting page.

But when the Series games are played,
Or Biff beats Wallop by a shade,
I make this observation sage:
First thing folks read's the sporting page.

October

October, with its red and gold,
Its magic touch on wood and wold,
Its noons so warm and nights so cold
And pleasant;
Its days are fair, its days are clear;
It is the tenth month of the year.
October, I might add, is here
At present.

But oh, my love, why should I trace
The witchery of October's face
In verse that's only commonplace,
When well you
Must know the many things that are
October's traits of earth and star?
If not, most any calendar
Will tell you.

Song

Better bards than I, my fair,
  Golder pens than mine,
Ought to celebrate your hair,
  And lips incarnadine.

More melodious songs than I
  Ever hope to chant
Ought to make the music my
  Penny piccolo can't.

Better bards with greater wit
  Ought to sing of you,
But, my Dear, you must admit
  That they never do.

THE END